

# Acid Elixirs

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## Huff Paint

With her at the wheel, I knew  
I'd have to huff paint at some point  
to restore myself. By the time  
we lurched through the Lincoln  
Tunnel, I was chewing on cardboard.  
My head heaved as we raced up past  
Mid-Town to the Upper West Side.  
She zoomed right through Central Park,  
picking off joggers. You might ask  
why she picked me up in the first place—  
my renewed Driver's License looked  
right, I suppose, or maybe my antiquated cell phone—  
no matter. We were off on a new adventure.  
I can't even say now if we were really together.

## Drunken Whore

Crossed-legged on a hard  
wood floor, I quoted a  
piece of Keats to her:  
*heard melodies are sweet,  
those unheard are sweeter.*  
She found these lines  
funnier than that week's  
New Yorker. I used this  
as an excuse to touch  
her knee: she found this  
even more risible. Hilarity  
reached its orgasm when  
I dubbed her a drunken  
whore. I retired then to  
doze in the bathtub.  
My snores echoed against the tiles.

## Acid Elixirs

Think of our sex as pistons in  
an engine, birds in a nest,  
feathers on a bird, but you  
must know that when one  
moves the other does, too.  
I never became parking brakes to you.  
Now I call, can't get through.  
What you tell me to do  
is wait, but in-between moments  
are castor oil, acid elixirs— swigging  
them, here, like nobody's business.

## Blotted Wounds

What can he be but what he already is?

Don't cry for his non-existent ideology.  
He doesn't. He thinks of it at odd moments,  
between discontented sips of whiskey, rock  
blaring like Wagner, when the moon  
makes him feel what he's lacking—  
the fire inside, knotted tension,  
clotted arteries, blotted wounds,  
sodden innocence. He's as tender  
as a calf, simple as a lark, quiet  
as a cat. All he thinks about is tail.

What can he "is" but what he's already been?

## Wood

You sent me poetry:  
you desired (I assume)  
to ravish me. What can  
I do to tell you that I'm  
not easily purchased, at  
least not by words? I'm  
ready to grant that all  
the trains passing my  
window are going some  
where; where do words  
ever go? When Hamlet  
told the two knaves not to  
play him, he meant what  
I mean now: either give  
me your body or work  
on your craft until there  
is flesh there wherever you  
say "I," which is to say  
until you're wood, finished.

## Apple Pie Eyes

I mouthed to my friend, “love”  
was the one we both missed:  
knit stockings, red gloves,  
apple-pie eyes. She ran away  
from booze, smoke, our beds.  
She was too good for us. Now  
all we have is the word: “love.”

He told me I misunderstood,  
that it’s the word not the girl  
that matters: love is self-  
creating, a spoken verdict delivered  
on existence, benediction on  
all levels of bullshit, hung  
from our days like stalagmites.

Well, I said, as long as there’s  
something in the world like  
love (spoken or un), I guess there’s  
something to hope for from  
each moment. Not much, he  
said, but we have to go, I need  
a vape. He was “right,” we vaped.

## Foul Balls

Looking back, I suppose  
the reason I never got  
past second base is that  
my balls never surmounted  
her fence. That is to say,  
she was prowling bleachers  
hoping to catch something,  
while I stuck, prone, to  
the field, a professional,  
master of arts which dictate  
degenerate behavior. Yes, I  
regret it, the whole thing,  
especially now that she's  
preggers by someone else.  
So, she caught someone's  
balls after all: were they foul?



## Hebetude

In my heart: a womb of  
yellow light, beams of  
which dance to pierce you  
as you sit in hebetude,  
blue. A searchlight of  
silver crowns my head,  
green at my feet, red  
at my neck-nape, purple  
at my groin, all this is  
light, all this must be  
reaching you, if you're  
not a closed circuit set  
to plunder ad infinitum.

## Cat's Ass

Just shortly, she showed up as  
I napped, angel/succubus, but one  
sling-armed. This one has had  
me on the hook for eight years,  
these of wavers, never knowing  
from one day to the next how I  
might find myself, in a barney  
or bedded down. All my wisdom  
could be shoved into a condom,  
inserted in a cat's ass, to come in— finished?

## Sea Saw

X-Ray eyes exercise: I  
see nightingales perch  
on branches (spring-  
blossomed), I notice  
fields weedy, fixed  
water bodies. All  
these things need  
nourishing, solid  
earth beneath them,  
sharp blades to cut  
dross away, boiling  
flames. I can be these  
things, but as you have  
nasty surface-dwelling  
habits, I might disappear  
overnight, out of sameness.

## Dirt Roads

There were ceaseless  
nights of never-there,  
endless days of couldn't-  
be, eternities of never.  
I can recall possibilities,  
ones marked to mark me,  
grow ripened to fall from  
how I stood. I could  
trace pressure drops,  
mount masques about  
them, moralize, but in  
bed I was still derelict.  
I do not say "over," I  
do not say "finished,"  
but you've clicked me  
into a feeling of being  
sewn tightly into life. I  
remember not them but  
the trail to you, & it broods.

## Raw Red Heart

Half lotus: I sit, you  
come to mind, I miss  
deep comeliness in a  
word you inscribe on  
my mind's waterfall:  
*wait.* I kneel in child's  
pose, head against  
hard wooden floor,  
feel a raw red heart  
beat across many  
miles. Ten deep  
breaths, your mind  
projects out into  
mine: there we are,  
each penetrating into  
a collective mind that  
comes into a breathing  
climax, language, cleave—

## Royal Flush

I'm too much in love to.  
I'm in love. I'm much in  
what I want to be out of.  
There is no substitute in  
sight for your languished  
open legs. It's not you I  
think of, but her-in-you. There's no  
substitute for her lips, & lips  
might trump legs like a royal  
flush over a full house. So  
in this, there is an if that's  
final, not behind us, if I  
move in blindness up to  
what's between us, but I  
wooded over neither "I."

## Red & White

I met an angel in red/white robes,  
snapped, “you bitch!”, awoke with  
another face-pressed to me: she  
whispered “Adam,” but wasn’t there.  
Two scratches appeared on my torso.  
Concupiscent visions clarified. Everything  
led to a sheer drop. Every hour was  
wolf-hour, continues now. It will, until I  
give in. It would be easy if I knew who  
was doing this, my blood or red on white—  
angels, demons, waifs or a goddess. Time stops.

\* a dusi/e-chap  
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